ool Act To Be Phased Out

(Continued from Page A1)

to meet immediate financial commitments, but at the same time it is expected to dramatically affect the financial picture for sheep producers nationwide who will deal with the loss of an average of 20 percent of sheep-related income with the eventual elimination of the program," according to the ASI Leader.

What this means is that producers should "make critical shortterm management decisions to meet immediate financial commitments," said Gene Brune, ASI president.

In a release last week, Pierce

Miller, ASI vice president, expressed frustration that the compromise reflects a move by Congress away from supporting agriculture industries in America.

"The sheep industry is losing its only form of protection when dealing with the agriculture trade policies of foreign governments," he said. "American lamb and wool producers have no quotas on foreign lamb and wool nor protection from imports, except the small tariffs on wool which have funded the incentive programs now being phased out.'

Miller said that other major sheep-producing countries heavily subsidize their sheep industries, including Australia, which has put "billions" in support of its indus-

try. The European Economic Community pays subsidies of \$24 per head in its countries, and China imposes high tariffs on imported products to protect its industry.

"It is a shame our country is willing to sacrifice support of a basic American industry when other countries worldwide recognize the economic and environmental benefits of sheep," said Miller.

The ASI Leader indicated that the industry plans to participate in hearings called for by Rep. Kika de

la Garza (D-Texas) to determine the industry's future direction.

"I think producers must get their heads together to make shortterm decisions," Pennsylvania Sheep and Wool Growers Association President Joseph Vogel told Lancaster Farming.

The long-term effects could be drastic, and producers have to be worried about another problem lurking on the horizon: wool surplus. Right now, Australia has about 800,000 metric tons of wool in storage, which it is set to market worldwide in the course of five years, with a large portion of it coming to the U.S. That will drag prices — and demand — of domestic wool down, according to

The Wool Act, established in

1954, allows up to 70 percent of the total tariffs on imported wool and wool products to go to the program to provide incentive pay. ments to wool and mohair produc. ers. Nearly 70,000 wool producers receive program payments.

More than 350,000 Americans are employed in related busines. ses, which could all be affected by the elimination of the Act.

The legislative committee of the Pennsylvania Sheep and Wool Growers association will meet toward the end of November this year to discuss the implications of the elimination of the Wool Act. For more information, contact Joseph Vogel at R.D. 1, Box 188, Kempton, PA 19529, (215) 756-4212.

ASCS Announces Crop Disaster Program

LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) --- Emergency disaster legislation signed recently by President Clinton authorizes USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service to pay 100 percent of each eligible disaster claim filed by producers who sustained quantity and/or quality losses on their 1993 crops due to weather related disasters.

"Eligible producers may apply for disaster assistance through March 4, 1994," ASCS official Jennifer K. Minnich said. She said the 1993 crop loss benefits will be paid to eligible producers after the producer submits all required information to ASCS.

To be eligible for disaster benefits, producers with crop insurance must have had losses greater than 35 percent. Producers without crop insurance must have had losses greater than 40 percent.

"Farmers who lost over 65 percent of their 1993 crops must purchase multiple peril crop insurance on the same crop for 1994," Minnich said.

The ASCS disaster program provides cash payments for production losses on participating program crops of wheat and feed grains; nonparticipating program crops; soybeans: and all commercial nonprogram crops.

More information on 1993 crop loss benefits may be obtained from the Lebanon County

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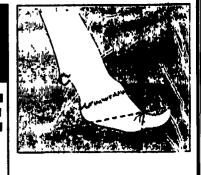
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